

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01217 271726Z

73

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OMB-01 SCCT-01 SY-04 IO-10 EB-07

FAA-00 DOTE-00 USSS-00 NIC-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /090 W

----- 052712

R 271609Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2563

DIA WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USCINCEUR

USINT BAGHDAD UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1217

LONDON FOR LAMBRAKIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PLO XF

SUBJECT: PLO LEADERSHIP'S EFFORTS TO CONVEY ANTI-TERRORIST IMAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 01217 271726Z

REF: BEIRUT 1000 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: PLO LEADERSHIP CONTINUES TO INSIST IT IS DEALING "SEVERELY" WITH TERRORISTS AND OTHER "UN-DISCIPLINED ELEMENTS" WHOSE ACTIONS IT VIEWS AS HARMFUL TO PALESTINIAN CAUSE. WE CONTINUE TO QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHETHER 'ARAFAT AND CO. CAN ACTUALLY DO THIS WITHOUT OPENLY EMBROIDERING PLO "MODERATES" WITH FEDAYEEN "REJECTIONIST" DIE-HARDS AND OTHER EXTREMISTS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRES. SADAT'S JAN 24 INTERVIEW IN LE FIGARO (CAIRO 930 AND FBIS), IN WHICH HE BLAMED LIBYAN GOVT FOR PREVENTING PLO FROM PUNISHING VC-10 HIJACKERS CAPTURED AT TUNIS, DREW SWIFT REJOINER FROM PLO LEADERSHIP HERE. PLO (Wafa) NEWS AGENCY ISSUED STATEMENT JAN 25 DECLARING THAT ALL FOUR HIJACKERS REMAINED IN PLO CUSTODY AND HAD ALREADY BEEN "PUNISHED SEVERELY". WITH REFERRING TO SADAT'S REMARKS, Wafa CLAIMED "ZIONIST PROPAGANDA" IS TRYING DISCREDIT PLO THROUGH "ORCHESTRATED DENIGRATION CAMPAIGN" IN WAKE OF LATEST ORLY AIRPORT INCIDENTS, ADDING: "PLO WISHES EMPHASIZE THAT IT HAS ALWAYS CONDEMNED SUCH ACTIONS AND SPARED NO EFFORT IN OPPOSING THEM. MOREOVER, PLO HAS INFLICTED MOST SEVERE PUNISHMENT POSSIBLE ON THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIJACKING A PLANE (VC-10) FROM DUBAI. THIS WAS THE ONLY OCCASION (SIC) ON WHICH PLO MANAGED TO LAY HANDS ON THOSE WHO UNDERTOOK SUCH ACTIONS. PLO EMPHASIZES AGAIN THAT IT WILL INFLICT MOST SEVERE PUNISHMENT ON ANY PALESTINIAN WHOSE PARTICIPATION IN SUCH HARMFUL ACTIONS CAN BE PROVED, WHENEVER IT CAN LAY HANDS ON THEM". PLO SPOKESMAN ALSO TOLD NEWSMEN THAT A MORE DETAILED Wafa STATEMENT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING, LISTING CHARGES AND SENTENCES PASSED AGAINST THE VC-10 HIJACKERS. (NO SUCH STATEMENT HAS APPEARED TO DATE.)

2. IN MEANTIME, CURRENT TENDER STATE OF GOL-FEDAYEEN RELATIONS RESULTING FROM RECENT COMMANDO SHENANIGANS HERE (PARA 2 REFTel) RECEIVED NEW IRRITANT JAN 24 IN FORM OF STATEMENT BY RIGHT-WING CHRISTIAN FALANGIST LEADER PIERRE GEMAYEL BITTERLY CRITICAL OF GOL'S "LAXITY" TOWARD FEDAYEEN. INVEIGHING AGAINST PLO LEADERSHIP
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 01217 271726Z

FOR ITS FAILURE TO PUT AN END TO "ANARCH" PREVAILING AMONG DISSIDENT FEDAYEEN GROUPS, GEMAYEL WARNED THERE WAS LIMIT TO HOW MUCH LEBANESE CAN ENDURE. HE NOTED GOL HAD BEEN FORCED TO "HAND OVER MANY PARTS OF ITS TERRITORY WHERE NON-LEBANESE LAW IS NOW IN FORCE" AND DESCRIBED SOUTH LEBANON IN PARTICULAR AS HAVING FALLEN COMPLETELY OUT OF GOL CONTROL, ADDING THAT GOL "IS THE LAST TO HAVE ANY SAY IN CONDITIONS PREVAILING THERE"

AND SARCASTICALLY SUGGESTING THAT IT CONSIDER HANDING OVER ALL POWER TO THE PALESTINIANS. "IF LEBANON CONTINUES UNDER THE PRESENT LAXITY," SAID GEMAYEL, "IT WILL RELINQUISH ITS RIGHTS TO ITS EXISTENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY. RATHER THAN CONTINUE UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, I WOULD MUCH PREFER TO BE RULED BY THE PALESTINE RESISTANCE. . . . AT LEAST WE WOULD THEN KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE AND WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS. AT ANY RATE, TO BE RULED BY THE RESISTANCE WOULD NOT BE WORSE THAN BEING RULED BY THE COLONIALISTS DURING THE MANDATE".

3. GEMAYEL'S BLAST HAS AROUSED PREDICTABLE UPROAR IN LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN POLITICAL CIRCLES HERE, WITH LEFTIST AND PRO-FEDAYEEN GROUPS ACCUSING HIM OF TRYING PROVOKE ANOTHER GOL-FEDAYEEN CONFRONTATION A LA MAY 1973 AND WITH VARIOUS "OPPOSITION" POLITICIANS USING HIS REMARKS TO DEMAND DISSOLUTION OF PRIMIN SOLH'S THREE-MONTH-OLD GOVT (IN WHICH FALANGE PARTY HOLDS TWO MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS). IN ADDITION, PAST WEEKEND SAW SEVERAL TENSE CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN CAMP-VASED FEDAYEEN AND FALANGIST "MILITIA" UNITS IN VARIOUS QUARTERS OF BEIRUT. IN CONTRAST TO ANGRY REACTION OF PFLP AND OTHER DISSIDENT FEDAYEEN GROUPS, HOWEVER, (ARAFAT'S OWN REACTION TO GEMAYEL'S STATEMENT HAS SO FAR BEEN SANCTIMONIOUSLY MILD, WITH PLO CHAIRMAN TERMING LEBANON'S SOVEREIGNTY "SACRED", DENYING ANY PLO INTENTION OF INTERFERING IN INTERNAL LEBANESE AFFAIRS, AND CLAIMING ALL PLO RESOURCES "ARE AT LEBANON'S DISPOSAL FOR SAKE OF COOPERATION AND DEFENSE OF LEBANESE SOIL AND PEOPLE" (FBIS TA260935).

4. COMMENT: NOTWITHSTANDING ABOVE EFFORTS BY PLO LEADERSHIP TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT REASON, "UNITY" AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BEIRUT 01217 271726Z

MODERATION PREVAIL THROUGHOUT FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT, WE BELIEVE 'ARAFAT AND CO. MAY BE FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO PRESERVE INTERNAL FEDAYEEN ORDER (SUCH AS IT EXISTS) WITHOUT RESORTING TO OPEN USE OF FORCE AGAINST DISSIDENT GROUPS. IN OUR VIEW, LATEST COMMANDO PROVOCATIONS DIRECTED AGAINST LEBANESE ARMY PROBABLY STEM FROM DESIRE ON PART OF PALESTINIAN DIE-HARDS TO RADICALIZE 'ARAFAT (SUCH TACTICS HAVE WORKED ON MORE THAN ONE PAST OCCASION) AND DISCREDIT PLO "MODERATES". MOREOVER, WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN LAST WEEK'S PLO EXCOMM MEETINGS IN DAMASCUS, THERE EMERGED NEW TENDENCY ON PART OF FEDAYEEN "REJECTIONISTS" (PFLP/GC, ETC.) TO MAKE COMMON CAUSE WITH FATAH "LEFTISTS" (INCLUDING ABU IYAD AND HIS FOLLOWERS) IN CHALLENGING 'ARAFAT'S POLICIES OF MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH "DEFEATIST" ARAB STATES (E.G., SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT,

SYRIA) AND PURSUING DIALOGUE WITH JORDAN. THESE
CONTINUING PRESSURES ARE LIKELY DETRACT CONSIDERABLY FROM
'ARAFAT'S ABILITY TO TAKE FIRM MEASURES AGAINST TERRORISTS
AND OTHER FEDAYEEN ELEMENTS WHOM HE HAS LATELY BEEN
CASTIGATING FOR UNDISCIPLINED, "IRRESPONSIBLE" OR "UN-
REVOLUTIONARY" BEHAVIOR.
GODLEY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, POLITICAL LEADERS, TERRORISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT01217
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750030-0132
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750119/aaaaaqkf.tel
Line Count: 176
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BEIRUT 1000
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <20 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLO LEADERSHIP'S EFFORTS TO CONVEY ANTI-TERRORIST IMAGE CONFIDENTIAL
TAGS: PINS, XF, PLO
To: STATE DIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006